

## 18.39 Cultural Access Programs and Expanded Learning Opportunities

*Resolution passed 2020*

**Whereas**, Cultural Access Programs (CAPs), as defined by the Washington State Legislature, will provide and develop equitable educational opportunities in arts, heritage, and science programs in the counties, cities, and municipalities where CAPs are approved; and

**Whereas**, CAPs increase public access through:

- Reduced or free admission to cultural and scientific educational organizations
- Creation of new or expanded programs for school districts, their students and families
- Increased cultural activities and employment in both rural and urban areas
- Sustaining organizations that provide regional cultural and heritage benefits for families, economies, and schools; and

**Whereas**, CAPs increase public school student access through:

- Expanded experiences at schools or on-site at cultural and scientific educational organizations
- Leveraged in-school education through curriculum-aligned scientific, heritage, and arts activities with each school district
- Funded access for every public school student to attend or participate in cultural and scientific learning opportunities every year
- Focusing on schools in economically disadvantaged areas; and

**Whereas**, Expanded Learning Opportunities (ELOs) are activities offered to students before or after school, during school, during intersession breaks, and during summer. Such opportunities build skills through hands-on, experiential learning, and expand upon, but do not replicate, traditional learning that happens during the school day; and

**Whereas**, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction's Expanded Learning Opportunities Council (ELOC) established that opportunity gaps (systemic inequity in education that structurally disadvantages certain demographics of students) consistently prevented Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) students, students of lower-income status, and students with disabilities from closing academic achievement gaps (the persistent disparity in academic performance between students from different racial and economic backgrounds), and from developing academic and social competencies, preparing every student regardless of background for career, college, and life; and

**Whereas**, research shows that expanding a school's CAP and ELO activities and access increases a number of benefits, including improved writing scores, reduced disciplinary infractions, and increased compassion for peers and culturally and racially diverse communities; and

**Whereas**, CAPs and ELOs improve educational outcomes for all students, especially for historically underserved students or youth who have been marginalized by our education system, such as BIPOC students, students of diverse cultural or linguistic backgrounds, students of lower-income status, students of high mobility (e.g., homeless, foster care, migrant, incarcerated, and military families), and students with special needs.



**Therefore, be it**

**Resolved,** that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils help to address opportunity and achievement gaps and improve outcomes for all students by advocating for school and community stakeholders to encourage, support, promote, and renew Cultural Access Programs (CAPs), and ensuring all students receive equitable access to Expanded Learning Opportunities (ELOs).